

CERVERA TRAPPED

He Must Surrender or Blow Up His Ships.

SANTIAGO FULLY BLOCKED.

The Merrimac Lies Across the Channel in Its Narrowest Part.

Complete Success of Lieut. Hobson's Brilliant Plan—He Suggested the Idea and Carried It Out as He Had Planned It—The Merrimac Was First Taken Twenty Miles Off Shore and Stripped of Everything of Value That Could Be Taken Out—All Her Coal Unloaded Except 9,000 Tons Left for Ballast—Barrage of the Crews to Volunteer for the Dangerous Service—Names of the Men Who Were Finally Chosen.

Special Cable Dispatch to The Sun.

KINGSTON, Jamaica, June 5.—Further details of the bottling up of Admiral Cervera at Santiago de Cuba are sent here. They supplement the despatches already cabled to The Sun. The Spanish squadron is sealed within the harbor, from which there is no possible chance of escape. There are now only two courses open to the Spanish commander, who for weeks kept the United States guessing as to his intentions and whereabouts. He must ultimately either sink his ships or surrender them to the Americans. It is scarcely believed that he will be willing to do the latter. The chances are that when he finds himself attacked by land and sea, as now seems to be the plan, he will blow up his ships to prevent them from falling into the hands of his enemy.

By one of the most daring deeds in the annals of naval history Admiral Sampson's fleet has succeeded in closing the narrow entrance to the Bay of Santiago, a feat accomplished under the guns of the Spanish batteries that line the shores and over the mines beneath the waters, which threatened instant destruction to those who took part in the desperate adventure.

The United States collier Merrimac, with a large quantity of coal aboard of her, lies almost crosswise of the channel at its narrowest part.

To clear the farway in face of the fire that could be poured into the entrance by the American warships would, it is believed, be an impossibility, and Admiral Cervera is therefore effectually trapped in the harbor where he sought refuge from the American warships that were scouring the Southern seas for him.

The names of the heroes who carried out the desperate undertaking are:

Lieut. RICHMOND PEARSON HOBSON, an Assistant Naval Constructor.

OSBORN DIGNAN, a coxswain of the Merrimac.

GEORGE F. PHILLIPS, a machinist of the Merrimac.

JOHN KELLY, a water tender of the Merrimac.

GEORGE CHARBET, a gunner's mate of the flagship New York.

DANIEL MONTAGUE, a seaman of the cruiser Brooklyn.

J. C. MURPHY, a coxswain of the Iowa.

RANDOLPH CLAUEN, a coxswain of the New York.

The latter was not selected as a volunteer, but his desire to accompany the expedition was so great that he practically deserted his ship. He was at work on the Merrimac and declined to leave her when all save the volunteers were ordered to join the flagship. His intention was to pass over and be in now a prisoner with his comrades in the Morro at Santiago.

When Admiral Sampson arrived off Santiago on Wednesday and assumed command of the combined fleets, one of the first to claim an audience with him was Assistant Naval Constructor Richmond Pearson Hobson, who is now the hero of the Santiago fleet. His rank in the navy is that of Lieutenant. He is a native of Greensborough, Ala., and he is but 27 years old. He was graduated from the Naval Academy in 1889, and subsequently studied naval construction abroad.

Young Hobson laid before the Admiral a plan to effectually bottle the Spanish fleet in Santiago harbor, so that one or two vessels could be left to guard this place and the rest of the fleet might be at liberty to go in safety to the north coast and cover the landing of troops.

With true courage Lieut. Hobson offered to lead the expedition which he suggested. His plan was to select a volunteer crew of just sufficient number to navigate the collier Merrimac, to strip the old ship of everything of any value, and then, under cover of darkness, to run her straight toward the narrowest part of the channel and sink her by explosions deep in the hold. The crew were to jump overboard as she sank, and, if possible, be picked up by the torpedo boat Porter and the steam launch close in shore for that purpose. The fleet flying outside was to cover the work of the Porter and the little launch.

Lieut. Hobson presented his plan in eloquent and persuasive language, and Admiral Sampson thought so well of it that he determined to put it into execution. Wednesday night was first selected. That afternoon this signal was made to the ships of the squadron by the New York:

"An attempt will be made to-night to sink the collier Merrimac at the entrance to the harbor. One volunteer, an enlisted man, is requested from each ship."

Immediately the men were mustered on the quarterdecks, and the Captains laid the plan before them, carefully explaining the unusual risks that the volunteers would incur. Practically the entire companies of the ships volunteered for the dangerous work.

Many of the men positively begged that they be accepted. On the cruiser Brooklyn alone 150 of her crew volunteered, and on

the Texas 140 signified their desire to go. The list was at first made up as follows:

Lieut. Hobson, Gunner's Mate Philip O'Boyle of the Texas, Gun Captain Mill O'Neil of the New Orleans, Seaman Anderson of the Massachusetts, and Seaman Wade of the Vixen.

After the Massachusetts and the smaller craft had cooled from the Merrimac, until only 2,000 tons were left in her hold for ballast, the old craft was taken twenty miles to the east of Santiago. There a force of men was put to work stripping her of everything of value and fitting powder charges for sinking her.

At 5 o'clock the Vixen came to each ship which had the honor of furnishing one of the volunteers and called out, for example: "New Orleans, there! We have come for your volunteer."

The men were taken on board the flagship New York. The squadron moved down to the entrance of the harbor, and at that night the work of stripping the collier, however, was not finished until 2 o'clock in the morning, and by the time she reached the fleet it was too late to make the attempt. Accordingly last night was fixed for the enterprise and a change of plans was announced.

It being believed that the volunteers that had been chosen on Wednesday had undergone too long a strain to render the best service, a new list was therefore made out. The original volunteers were sent back to their ships, broken-hearted because they had lost a chance to die for their country, and those whose names have been given were chosen.

At sunset yesterday the fleet took up a new formation ordered by Admiral Sampson. The ships arranged themselves in an arc of a circle of five miles radius, with Morro Castle as the centre. This was the order, beginning at the westward:

Vixen, Brooklyn, Marblehead, Texas, Massachusetts, Oregon, Iowa, New York, New Orleans, and Mayflower. The colliers, cable and supply boats remained outside the circle, while the Dolphin and Porter acted as despatch boats.

The evening wore away slowly. A full moon bathed the quiet waters of the Caribbean Sea in a splendid lustre of silver and clothed the high mountains around Santiago in robes of glorious, hazy whiteness.

The lights of the city blinked meekly in the distance on the hillside, while the single searchlight of the Morro lighthouse burned as brightly as if no enemy lay beneath it outside the harbor. The moon scene was beautifully peaceful. On the decks of the big ships, however, all was different.

The entire crews were lying prone upon the decks, with only rubber blankets beneath them. The men are numbered and the even and odd numbers were sleeping alternately, two hours at a time, with their guns and small arms at their sides.

In the event of a torpedo attack each man awakes slaps the man next to him, who is asleep, on the shoulder, and in an instant the dark uncertain object in the water plunging toward the ship, is ridged. At 2:30 o'clock, while the moon was still bright, the crew of the Merrimac was sent aboard the Texas and the seven men who remained took her toward the western shore of the harbor entrance at once, closely followed by the launch of the New York, in command of Naval Cadet Joseph Wright Powell of Oswego, N. Y. Powell, too, and the four men in the launch with him, Coxswain Peterson, Fireman Horsman, Engineer Nelson and Seaman Peterson, all of the New York, proved themselves true heroes. This launch lay close to the western shore.

Cadet Powell and his crew saw the Merrimac head straight for Estrella Point, which is on the east side of the harbor, back of the Morro. They knew that just before she reached that point the engines were to be stopped and the momentum allowed to carry her on.

Then the flimsy wooden piers holding the bonnets of her sea valves in place were to be kicked aside, the helm put hard to starboard, and the starboard bow anchor let go. This would steer the ship directly across the channel and check her headway.

At the same time seven reduced 8-inch charges, containing eighty pounds of brown powder in copper cases and protected by pitch from water, were to be set off separately. These charges were suspended about ten feet below the water line at intervals of thirty feet, and connected by a series of dry batteries. As the ship steered across the channel the forward port powder charge was to be exploded. Then, as the stern swung into position, the anchor lashed to the starboard anchor was to be let go and the other six charges exploded in succession.

A catamaran and lifeboat were slung aft on the starboard side ready for the seven men to drop into them.

The crew in the steam launch watched the course of the old collier with eyes strained. The moon had sunk behind the horizon. It was 3:20 o'clock.

On, on the heroes went. Lieut. Hobson stood on the bridge of the old collier, dressed in full uniform. The other six men were at their posts, clad in tights, to aid their escape in case they had to swim a long distance.

The watchers saw her head straight for Estrella Point, saw her swing hard across the channel, apparently undiscovered, heard five of the seven charges explode, and then began a screaming, flashing, death-dealing fire from the Spanish ships and batteries that hid the rest from view.

The battery on Dead Man's Point, square in the centre of the harbor, opened the fire and soon directed its guns against the launch.

In the face of this hell, with 10 and 12 inch guns blazing at them at this short range, Cadet Powell and the crew of his launch continued to search for the men of the Merrimac.

They saw then the guns of the Cristobal Colon, Admiral Cervera's flagship, and of the old cruiser Reina Mercedes, which had been considered gunless, trained on them and thundering in their ears.

Still they searched, with never as much as a faint cry for help or the sight of a single arm raised in mute appeal to guide them.

Those on the battleship and others on the Texas's despatch boat looking into the mouth of the harbor with glasses saw only a sheet of flame, with the roar of the guns lasted for thirty-five minutes.

By this time dawn had tinged the land

and sky with light, and the tiny launch could still be seen hovering close to the shore.

On the west side of the harbor, in the centre of the channel, just where Hobson had promised to sink his vessel, could be seen the tops of the Merrimac's masts. The harbor was blocked.

A ship which cost the Government \$380,000 and 2,000 tons of coal had effectually closed the entrance.

Powell and his men waited for Hobson and his comrades to emerge from the mouth of the channel till all hope of their return was gone.

Then they sadly turned the prow of their launch toward the cruiser New York. There was great anxiety throughout the fleet for the brave men who had taken their lives in their hands.

The hope remained that they had not perished, and this hope was justified, a few hours later, when, as stated in my previous despatch, a flag of truce came from Admiral Cervera saying that all of Hobson's party were alive, that they had fallen into the hands of the Spaniards, that two were slightly wounded, and offering, in recognition of their bravery, to exchange them.

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At the request of the Navy Department this list of Spanish military prisoners has been furnished to the public.

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dent will grant warrants to them. It will not be necessary to send their names to the Senate. A warrant officer wears a uniform very much like the undress of a commissioned officer. He also wears a cap that a layman cannot distinguish from that worn by his superior. A warrant officer is known as gunner, sailmaker, carpenter, or boatswain, according to his duties; is called "Mister" by the officers, and is treated with great consideration. His pay ranges from \$1,200 to \$1,500 a year, and he can retire for age with his superior's pay. He is paid when he is on duty at the time of retirement.

Arrangements for the exchange of Hobson and the seven enlisted men have been left to Admiral Sampson and Gen. Shafter. Fifteen Spanish prisoners of war are now at Fort McPherson, Ga., and an equal number of these, perhaps more, will be turned over to Spanish authorities in Cuba in exchange for the surrender of the eight Americans.

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TROOPS SAIL FROM TAMPA.

ALL OF THE REGULARS AND MOST OF THE VOLUNTEERS ON THE SEA.

These at Mobile Have Also Departed—The United States at the War Department as to Their Destination, but It Is Inferred That They Are on Their Way to Santiago and Porto Rico—Defense of the Quartermaster's Department from Criticisms Alleging Delay in Furnishing Supplies.

WASHINGTON, June 5.—The War Department was practically deserted to-day by officers and clerks, only a few of the latter being at their desks during the morning to dispose of the immense amount of mail which is received daily at the department. Adj. Gen. Corbin was in his office nearly all day with a stenographer whom he kept busy, and the single aide to whom his personal staff has been reduced.

The utmost secrecy in regard to the movements of troops is enjoined upon officers and confidential clerks on duty at the War Department. The precautions against publicity in this respect—already abundantly observed—have been made more stringent. The department has had official advice, presumably, of the departure of troops from Mobile and Tampa, and it is commonly supposed that all of the regulars and nearly all the volunteer troops are now on the sea.

It is left to conjecture what direction the transports have taken, but by observant army officers the military force is assumed to have been despatched to Santiago and Porto Rico.

Up to midnight the Navy Department had landed marines near Santiago, but no disclosure was made public by Admiral Sampson. Many rumors of fighting at Santiago were in circulation during the evening, but the department officials said they had no confirmation of them. A report that Admiral Sampson had landed marines near Santiago, but no disclosure was made public by Admiral Sampson.

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